

JBSA LEGACY

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JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO

FEBRUARY 11, 2022



BRIAN G. RHODES

U.S. Army MEDEVAC HH-60 helicopters from the 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division land at a parade field adjacent to the U.S. Army Medical Center of Excellence at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston Jan. 27.

U.S. Army MEDEVAC HH-60 helicopters land at JBSA

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Weather is no gambling matter for 12th OSS flight chief

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37th TRW recognized with Verne Orr Award for AETC

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DOD, nation celebrate Black History Month

By David Vergun

DOD NEWS

Black History Month, also known as National African American History Month, is an annual celebration of achievements by Black Americans and a time to recognize the positive impact they've had on the history of the United States and the Defense Department.

Black people have fought in every United States war, from the Revolutionary War through the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Ninety African Americans have been awarded the Medal of Honor.

Yet, throughout most of American history, Black service members were placed in segregated units. Desegregation didn't occur until Jan. 26, 1948, when President Harry S. Truman issued Executive Order 9981 directing the armed services to integrate.

Active duty service members number 1,319,283; of those, 227,974, or 17.3%, are African American, as of December 2021. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2020, the Black or African American population was 41.1 million, representing 12.4% of the U.S. population.

Notable Dates

- » Black people, both slave and free, served on both sides during the Revolutionary War. African Americans also served on both sides in the War of 1812 (1812-1815). Many served with the British in order to gain their freedom and resettle in non-slave nations, particularly Canada, Bermuda and Sierra Leone.
- » In the Civil War (1861-1865), more than



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Tuskegee Airmen gather around a table and talk in Ramitelli, Italy, in March 1945.

186,000 African Americans fought for the Union Army and Navy. A lesser number of African Americans were used as laborers on the Confederate side.

- » Six regiments of African Americans, known as Buffalo Soldiers, served in the Indian Wars from 1863 to the early 1900s and in the Spanish-American War in 1898.
- » About 367,000 African Americans service members served in Europe during World War I (1917-1918).
- » Around 1.3 million African American service members served during World War II (1941-1945).
- » During the Korean War (1950-1953), about 600,000 Black service members served in the armed forces.
- » About 300,000 African Americans served in the Vietnam War (1961-1975).
- » The two top-level Black Americans in

DOD have been Army Gen. Colin Powell, who served as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff from 1989 to 1993, and Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III who was sworn in January 2021.

History of the Celebration

The origin of Black History Month is associated with the noted African-American historian Carter G. Woodson. In 1926, he initiated the celebration of Negro History Week during the second week in February.

February was chosen because that is the birth month of Frederick Douglass, an abolitionist and social reformer, and President Abraham Lincoln, who abolished slavery.

The celebration was expanded to the entire month of February in 1976 by President Gerald Ford; since that time, every president has designated February as Black History Month.

During his 1976 Black History Month announcement, Ford linked the commemoration to the nation's 200th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence that year.

Freedom and the recognition of individual rights are what our revolution was all about. They were ideals that inspired our fight for independence, ideals that we have been striving to live up to ever since. Yet, it took many years before these ideals became a reality for Black citizens," Ford said.

On Feb. 11, 1986, Congress passed Public Law 99-244, which designated each February as "National Black (Afro-American) History Month."

JBSA celebrates Black History Month

By Maria F. Rodriguez

AFFIRMATIVE EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM MANAGER,
802ND FORCE SUPPORT SQUADRON

Black History Month is held throughout February and members of Joint Base San Antonio are encouraged to celebrate.

African American/Black History Month was established by Public Law 99-244 and can trace its origins back to 1915 when historian and author Dr. Carter G. Woodson founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History. This organization is now known as the Association for the Study of African American Life and History, or ASALH.

In 1976, this commemoration of black

history in the United States was expanded by ASALH to Black History Month, also known as African American History Month, and President Gerald Ford issued the first Message on the Observance of Black History Month that year.

In subsequent years, Presidents Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan and each subsequent president continued to issue messages honoring African American History Month.

"The foremost purpose of Black History Month is to make all Americans aware of this struggle for freedom and equal opportunity," Reagan said in his proclamation in 1986. "This month is a time to celebrate the many achievements of

African Americans in every field from science and the arts to politics and religion."

In observance of Black History Month, or BHM, Joint Base San Antonio is displaying BHM posters across Joint Base San Antonio. Black History Month posters will be displayed at JBSA Military and Family Readiness Centers as well as JBSA libraries.

Visitors to the above-mentioned locations are encouraged to follow COVID-19 health and safety measures, including practicing physical distancing.

For more information, contact the JBSA Civilian Personnel Section at 210-221-1408 or email usaf.jbsa.502-abw.mbx.jbsa-fsh-cps@mail.mil.

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Feedback Fridays

Brig. Gen. Caroline M. Miller

502D AIR BASE WING AND JOINT BASE
SAN ANTONIO COMMANDER

Feedback Fridays is a weekly forum that aims to connect the 502D Air Base Wing with members of the Joint Base San Antonio community. Questions are collected during commander's calls, town hall meetings and throughout the week.

If you have a question or concern, please send an email to 502ABW.PA.official@us.af.mil using the subject line "Feedback Fridays."

Questions will be further researched and published as information becomes available.

Q: I am in a two-income household with two children. I need to pick up prescriptions for my family once or twice a month.

The Schertz Medical Home Clinic has scaled back its hours as a result of COVID-19. It has been

nearly two years and I have needed to take leave from work every time I have needed to pick up something from the pharmacy.

Before COVID-19, they were open until 7:30 p.m. several nights a week. At this point, it has added up to several days off work and wasted leave to wait in a single-car line that closes at 4 p.m.

If they could at least stay open until 5:30 p.m. a couple of nights a week, it will give those of us who are working a chance to get there in time without needing to use leave to do it.

It is long overdue and the Schertz Medical Home Clinic should be more attentive to the needs of the patients they serve. Thank you.

A: Thank you for sharing your concerns with us.

We would like to sincerely apologize for the inconvenience. Prior to COVID-19, Schertz Medical Home was open for evening appointments a few days a week. This required the support of pharmacy services

for patients who were prescribed medications during their appointments.

Due to COVID-19, the evening clinic hours were stopped, but we continue to assess conditions and will post an update in the event evening clinic hours resume.

As an alternative option, BAMC Medical Mall hours of operation are Monday-Friday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Another pharmacy source to consider is the TRICARE Pharmacy Home Delivery Program. The home delivery program is a convenient and easy pharmacy source through which patients can have their required medications mailed directly to their homes.

Please keep in mind that prescriptions filled through the home delivery program will incur a co-pay charge. For more information on the home delivery program, please visit <https://www.tricare.mil/homedelivery>. Thank you for your patience and support!

Armed Services Blood Program urges donors to step up

By Claudia Sanchez-Bustamante

MHS COMMUNICATIONS

The Armed Services Blood Program's blood donor centers at Joint Base San Antonio are in need of blood from the military community.

The Armed Services Blood Centers at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston and JBSA-Lackland are requesting donors to make up for a local blood shortage, but the request is a recurring one — the need for blood always exists for cancer patients, trauma victims and warfighters.

"Blood supply is critically low across the nation, not only for the ASBP, but for civilian organizations as well," said Army Col. Audra Taylor, the ASBP's division chief. The ASBP provides lifesaving blood products to service members, their families, retirees and veterans worldwide.

"Historically, donations decrease in the holiday and winter months due to schedule changes, people taking leave, families going on vacation, weather conditions or illnesses impeding people from donating," Taylor said.

"This year, it's all of those things in addition to COVID-19 restrictions and overall health and safety concerns for potential donors and ASBP blood donor center team members."

Army Lt. Gen. (Dr.) Ronald Place, the Defense Health Agency's director, echoed the sentiments about the importance of blood donors and a steady

resupply of blood products.

"Adequate blood supplies are a critical part of a ready medical force. Our medical providers must have everything they need to complete their mission, including blood. A donation can be done in as little as one hour and yield lifesaving blood products for surgical procedures, traumatic injuries, chronic illness and cancer treatment," Place said.

Blood is vital year-round

"There is no substitute for blood," Taylor said. "It's a critical tool in saving lives."

Administered to treat various conditions, blood products are essential for warfighters in combat operations and for emergency use wherever they are, Taylor added.

"It's also necessary to conduct surgeries at military hospitals and clinics," she said.

The ASBP ensures global military medical centers, hospitals and clinics have immediate and easy access to safe and viable blood and blood products. This includes whole blood, red blood cells, platelets, plasma and transfusable components derived from them.

"But it's not possible for ASBP to fulfill its mission if not for our donors," Taylor said.

In general, most people don't think about blood until it's needed, she added.

Additionally, blood products will expire if left on the shelf for too long. Some blood products are only viable for

a few days or weeks. "It needs to be on the shelf before the need arises," Taylor said.

Ensuring mission readiness

Military leaders and medical providers have often expressed their gratitude for the many military community members who have participated in blood donor programs in recent years.

National Blood Donor Month was established in January 1969 to address blood shortages during the holiday and winter season and to thank donors who have supported the nation's blood supply throughout the year.

As the official provider of blood products to the U.S. armed forces and military community, the ASBP helps ensure mission readiness around the world.

"We focus on equipping the warfighter with the life-saving blood and blood products they need on the battlefield as well as in military hospitals and clinics worldwide," said Taylor.

This includes collecting, processing, storing, transporting and distributing blood and products to ill or injured service members, their families, retirees and veterans around the world.

Where can you donate?

ASBP blood donor centers are located throughout the United States and at locations around the world.

"We have more than 20 donor centers,

and many of them conduct mobile blood drives around their areas and sometimes in places further away on a regular basis," Taylor explained.

"As the Defense Department's blood program, we are limited to collect at federally owned or leased properties only," she said. "But we're thankful for the many bases, academies, centers and more that help us make missions and sponsor regular blood drives."

Ready to donate? If you are able and eligible, find a blood drive or blood donor center near you at www.militarydonor.com.

Here is how JBSA blood donors can book appointments online:

- Go to <https://www.militarydonor.com>
- Click on "Locate a Blood Drive"
- Search by Sponsor Code: ABDC (for JBSA-Fort Sam Houston) or ASBBC-SA (for JBSA-Lackland)
- Click on "Search"
- Click the date on which you can donate.
- Click the word "Schedule." Follow the prompts to enter your information.
- Remember to bring your cloth mask with you.

For questions, call the Akeroyd Blood Donor Center at 210-295-4655 or the Lackland Blood Donor Center at 210-292-8145.

Many people have not been able to donate because of time spent in Europe or the United Kingdom between 1980 and 1996. For some people, that is changing. For more information, call 210-292-8145.

Department of the Army to initiate separation of COVID-19 vaccination order refusers

U.S. Army Public Affairs

The United States Army announced Feb. 2 that it will immediately begin separating Soldiers from the service who refuse to be vaccinated against COVID-19.

Under a directive issued by Secretary of the Army Christine Wormuth, commanders are to initiate involuntary administrative separation proceedings against any Soldier who has refused the COVID-19 vaccination order and does not have an approved or pending exemption request.

The order applies to regular Army Soldiers, reserve-component Soldiers serving on Title 10 active-duty, and cadets.

“Army readiness depends on Soldiers who are prepared to train, deploy, fight and win our nation’s wars,” Wormuth said. “Unvaccinated Soldiers present risk to the force and jeopardize readiness. We will begin involuntary separation proceedings for Soldiers who refuse the vaccine order and are not pending a final decision on an exemption.”

Army Directive 2022-02 details how Army commanders are to proceed with separation proceedings and requires them to process these separation actions as expeditiously as possible.

Service members separated due to refusal of the COVID-19 vaccination order will not be eligible for involuntary separation pay and may be subject to recoupment of any unearned special or incentive pays.

As an exception, Soldiers who will



STAFF SGT. DESMOND CASSELL

Staff Sgt. Brenda Collins (left), a medical specialist from Carl R. Darnall Army Medical Center administers the COVID-19 vaccination to a patient during the phase one process Dec. 15, 2020, at Fort Hood, Texas.

complete their separation or retirement, or begin transition leave, on or before July 1, 2022, will be granted a temporary exemption and will be permitted to complete their separations or retirements.

The least favorable characterization of service that may be issued is General (Under Honorable Conditions), unless additional misconduct warrants separation with an Other than Honorable characterization of service.

Unvaccinated Soldiers who have

requested medical exemption or religious accommodations are temporarily exempt from the COVID-19 vaccination requirement while their requests are under review.

Soldiers who receive denials of their medical exemption or religious accommodation requests will have seven calendar days from the denial to do one of the following or face separation proceedings:

1. Begin a COVID-19 vaccination regimen. If a Soldier indicates intent to

begin the vaccination regimen, commanders may use their discretion to adjust the timeline based on local COVID-19 vaccination supplies.

2. Submit an appeal to the final appeal authority. If a final appeal is denied, the Soldier will have seven calendar days from notice of denial to begin the COVID-19 vaccination regimen.

Commanders will ensure all unvaccinated service members comply with COVID-19 screening and testing requirements and applicable safety standards. Army leaders will continue to counsel all unvaccinated individuals on the health benefits of receiving the COVID-19 vaccine.

The Army has not yet involuntarily separated any Soldiers solely for refusing the lawful order to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. As of Jan. 26, Army commanders have relieved a total of six regular Army leaders, including two battalion commanders, and issued 3,073 general officer written reprimands to Soldiers for refusing the vaccination order.

Army Directive 2022-02 (Personnel Actions for Active Duty Soldiers Who Refuse the COVID-19 Vaccination Order and Accession Requirements for Unvaccinated Individuals) will be available online at the Army Publishing Directorate website (<https://armypubs.army.mil/ProductMaps/PubForm/ArmyDir.aspx>).

The Army’s most recent update on vaccination and exemption statistics is available online at <https://www.army.mil/article/253543/>.

Nameplates now available for Army Green Service Uniform

U.S. Army Public Affairs

Soldiers can now wear a nameplate on their Army Green Service Uniforms. The Army approved the AGSU for everyday wear in late 2018, but initially, nameplates were not authorized for wear with the uniform.

The new nameplate is dark brown with taupe lettering, a matte finish and beveled edge. The nameplates will be available for purchase at various authorized merchants.

Although this is a small update to the AGSU, it will have an impactful

meaning to Soldiers and leaders because the new nameplates will allow accent marks and hyphens, so unique names can be pronounced properly.

“The Army authorized diacritics and hyphens on nameplates as a way for Soldiers to identify themselves,” said Sgt. Maj. Ashleigh Sykes, Sergeant Major of Uniform Policy at the Office of U.S. Army Personnel (G-1). “We should honor Soldiers’ identity on all Army uniforms, which is why we are excited to release the new nameplate.”

The current black-and-white nameplates that are worn with the

Army Service Uniform are not authorized to be worn with the AGSU.

The AGSU nameplate is currently optional, but will be required to be worn with the AGSU coat, the long- and short-sleeve shirts, the Eisenhower jacket and the Heritage 564 pullover sweater by Oct. 1, 2023. Additionally, the nameplate will be mandatory for issue at unit Central Issue Facilities.

Soldiers still have until Oct. 1, 2027, to acquire the AGSU uniform and replace the ASU as their service uniform.



MAJ. ANGEL L. TOMKO

U.S. Army Sgt. Maj. Ashleigh Sykes, Army Uniform Policy Branch SGM, wears a nameplate, with her Army AGSU uniform, now authorized by Army policy.

National Museum of the USAF hosts free virtual program

By Lisa M. Riley

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE U.S. AIR FORCE

Registration is now open for a free virtual Read Across America program at the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force.

The program will feature four aviation-themed books targeting second- and third-grade classrooms. Each registrant will receive a YouTube link to an 8-15 minute video, which includes the book reading with images from the book and a short tour of a corresponding museum exhibit.

The books and guest readers are:

- ▶▶ Author Timothy Gaffney reading his book "Wee and the Wright Brothers"
- ▶▶ Scott DiMauro, Ohio Education Association (OEA) president, reading "Mousetronaut"
- ▶▶ Jeff Wensing, OEA vice president, reading "Helicopters on the Move"
- ▶▶ Mark Hill, OEA secretary-treasurer, reading "Violet the Pilot"

Registration is limited to the first 1,500 requests and interested

teachers are encouraged to register now by emailing NationalMuseum.MUT@us.af.mil. Links to the readings will be available from March 2-30, 2022.

Read Across America was launched in 1998 by the National Education Association and is the nation's largest celebration of reading. Federal endorsement is not implied.

All links are provided with the support of the authors and publishers.

The National Museum of the U.S. Air Force, located at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base near Dayton, Ohio, is the world's largest military aviation museum. With free admission and parking, the museum features more than 350 aerospace vehicles and missiles and thousands of artifacts amid more than 19 acres of indoor exhibit space. Each year, thousands of visitors from around the world come to the museum.

For more information, visit www.nationalmuseum.af.mil or call 937-255-3286.



LISA RILEY

Guest readers visit the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force to give voice to four books selected for the 2022 virtual Read Across America.

FORT SAM HOUSTON

MEDCoE welcomes first class of new Occupational Therapy Doctorate program

By David DeKunder

502ND AIR BASE WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The U.S. Army Medical Center of Excellence, or MEDCoE, at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston, welcomed the first class of students in the Army-Baylor University Occupational Therapy Doctorate Program during a ribbon-cutting ceremony at MEDCoE Jan. 28.

Col. Enrique Smith-Forbes, Army-Baylor University Occupational Therapy Doctorate Program director, introduced the 11 students in the inaugural Occupational Therapy Doctorate Program class during the first part of the ceremony at Blesse Auditorium.

Afterward, Maj. Gen. Dennis P. LeMaster, MEDCoE commanding general, led the ceremony for the opening of the newly renovated Occupational Therapy Doctorate Program Activities of Daily Living lab located in Willis Hall, which will help in meeting program requirements and enhance the learning experience for the students in the program.

The program trains students in becoming occupational therapists in the Army, serving in a variety of practice areas. Occupational therapists are members of the Army Medical Specialist Corps, which includes physical therapists, dietitians and physician assistants.

Smith-Forbes said the new graduate program will provide advanced training to occupational therapists in helping to meet both the mental and physical needs of the Army force.

"This program comes to meet the needs for the Army's new Holistic Health and Fitness System, the H2F," Smith-Forbes said. "It will help to increase the readiness and optimize the performance of the American Soldier."

H2F is the Army's doctrine of force readiness and lethality and optimal physical and non-physical



JOSE RODRIGUEZ

Maj. Gen. Dennis P. LeMaster, U.S. Army Medical Center of Excellence commanding general (third from left) along with (from left) retired Col Skip Gill, Col Enrique Smith-Forbes, Dr. Sheri Dragoo and Dr. Denny Kramer pose in front of a display at the new Army-Baylor Occupational Therapy Doctorate Program lab.

performance. The goal of H2F is to help service members in reducing injury rates, improving rehabilitation after injury and increasing the overall effectiveness of the Army force.

According to Smith-Forbes, graduates of the program will learn advanced practice skills including wellness, cognitive and mental health, behavioral health, upper extremity evaluation and research.

"The occupational therapist, in addition with the physical therapist and the registered dietitian, are going to be part of the H2F team, the Holistic Health and Fitness team," Smith-Forbes said. "They are going to be embedded into the brigades of the units and will help the Soldiers in their readiness."

Retired Col. Skip Gill, former MEDCoE deputy commandant, helped to establish the formation of

the Occupational Therapy Doctorate Program while at MEDCoE. He was one of the guest speakers at the ceremony.

"Today is a culmination of many years' worth of effort, a couple years' worth of planning and then eighteen months of lightning speed execution," Gill said. "What's awesome today is we're meeting the Army's mission, to take an initiative in holistic health, H2F."

"What we needed to do to meet the Army's mission was to build our own occupational therapists. We didn't have the capacity, and it wasn't out there in the civilian education system to meet the Army's requirements. That took a lot of work," Gill added. "The efforts of the Command Group to get that across the finish line was huge."

To graduate from the program,

students will have to complete 18 months of coursework and 12 months of clinical and research work at a military treatment facility or hospital. The program's first class of students is set to graduate in July 2024.

MEDCoE received candidacy status for the Occupational Therapy Doctorate program from The Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education, or ACOTE.

If the program is granted full accreditation status in 2024, graduates will be eligible to take the national certification examination administered by the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy and to apply for a state license.

For more information on this program, visit <https://www.baylor.edu/graduate/dscot/>.



PHOTOS BY BRIAN G. RHODES

A U.S. Army MEDEVAC HH-60 helicopter from the 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division out of Fort Carson, Colorado, lands at MacArthur Parade Field, adjacent to the U.S. Army Medical Center of Excellence at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston Jan. 27.

Army MEDEVAC helicopters land at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston

By Brian G. Rhodes
502ND AIR BASE WING
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

A group of U.S. Army medical evacuation HH-60 Black Hawk helicopters from the 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, landed at MacArthur Parade Field, adjacent to the U.S. Army Medical Center of Excellence, at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston Jan. 27.

Medical school trainees from the U.S. Army Medical Center of Excellence were invited to tour the aircraft and ask questions of the flight crew after the landing.



A U.S. Army MEDEVAC HH-60 helicopter crew member communicates with the pilot after landing at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston Jan. 27.



U.S. Army medical school trainees at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston were invited to tour the aircraft and ask questions of the flight crew after the landing Jan. 27.

Basura Bash returns Feb. 19 after last year's pandemic cancelation

By Sarah Otto

802ND CIVIL ENGINEER SQUADRON

The Basura Bash is back on at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Feb. 19 after being canceled last year due to the pandemic and volunteers are needed.

Since 1995, the Basura Bash has helped to clean up San Antonio watersheds by removing tons of litter and trash from creeks and lakes, helping keep wildlife habitats and waterways clean.

Volunteers may participate individually or as teams for one of 22 waterway locations, including Salado Creek at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston, at <http://basurabash.org/salado-creek-at-ft-sam-houston/>. All participants should register and should be at least 15 years old.

Most trash and debris seen in San Antonio's waterways has traveled via wind and stormwater runoff to get there, sometimes from miles away. When stormwater flows on the surface instead of soaking into the ground, stormwater runoff goes into creeks and rivers, picking up trash and debris along the way.

Stormwater runoff transports trash from streets, including larger items, such as tires, furniture, or broken appliances left on the side of the road, as well as the chemicals on lawns and driveways, and waste from pets. Even soil and grass clippings can have an adverse effect on the aquatic life in waterways.

This is how the majority of pollutants end up in our waterways, affecting plants, fish, animals and people.

While the Basura Bash is a one-day event, people can help to keep waterways clean every day by:

- » Putting trash/recyclables into their proper receptacles,
- » Securing trash or other items in truck beds,
- » Cleaning up chemicals spilled onto driveways,
- » Properly disposing of pet waste,
- » Taking larger bulk items or construction waste to the landfill or putting it out for waste disposal bulk



DAVID DEKUNDER

Several Sailors did their part to help the environment by collecting trash along Salado Creek during the Basura Bash at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston Feb. 15, 2020.

pickup service, and
» Reducing stormwater runoff by utilizing permeable surfaces and landscape elements that slow or collect rainwater in home landscaping.

During the last Basura Bash, more than 1,800 volunteers pitched in to clean 20 tributaries across San Antonio, collecting 34 tons of trash and recycling 1.5 tons of metal.

Almost 300 of those volunteers, including the Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, Navy personnel, and numerous military and civilian families, came out to help clean up at Salado Creek Park on JBSA-Fort Sam Houston.

It is recommended that volunteers wear long pants, sturdy shoes or

boots, and bring bug repellent. In light of the pandemic, it is also highly recommended that participants wear a mask whenever it is not possible to maintain physical distancing.

Gloves, trash bags, and water for drinking will be provided for all volunteers. It is recommended that volunteers bring their own reusable water bottles in order to reduce the number of plastic water bottles thrown in the recycle bins. Hand sanitizer will also be available at the registration table and by the food and water tables.

Joint Base San Antonio's participation in Basura Bash is coordinated by the 802nd Civil Engineer Squadron and is supported

by MWR Outdoor Recreation staff members, the 502nd Civil Engineer Squadron's Heavy Repair Shop, and many other individuals and teams representing units across JBSA.

At JBSA-Fort Sam Houston, volunteers should arrive by 8:30 a.m. to check-in and to receive a safety briefing and instructions, at Salado Creek Park off of WW White Road. Installation access is required to access this location.

For more information or to register for the event, go to <https://www.basurabash.org/> or call 210-671-0396. For more information on how to keep our storm drains clean for downstream, call 210-652-3314.

Military hospital support to FEMA to begin in four states, expands in two states

U.S. Army North (Fifth Army) Public Affairs

At the request of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, approximately 220 military medical personnel, including medical doctors, nurses, and respiratory therapists have deployed, or will deploy, within the next two weeks, in 14 teams to six states to support civilian healthcare workers treating COVID-19 patients.

“Communities and healthcare facilities in certain areas remain heavily burdened by coronavirus-induced hospitalizations,” said Lt. Gen. John R. Evans Jr., U.S. Army North commander, in a news release Feb. 3. “We are proud of the role our military teams play in multiple medical centers supporting FEMA and the whole-of-government response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Department of Defense is only one of the several federal agencies to provide such assistance.”

The Department of Defense is beginning support in California, Connecticut, Louisiana, and Oklahoma and expanding support to Michigan and New York.

» In California, one 15-person team from the U.S. Air Force will support Emanate Health Queen of the Valley Hospital in West Covina.

» In Connecticut, three 15-person teams from the U.S. Air Force will support Saint Francis Hospital and Hartford Hospital in Hartford and Yale New Haven Hospital in New Haven.

» In Louisiana, two 15-person teams from the U.S. Air Force will support St. Francis Medical Center in Monroe.

» In Michigan, one 20-person team from the U.S. Army will support Sparrow Hospital in Lansing. This team will join two teams currently supporting Saginaw and Wyandotte.

» In New York, two 15-person teams from the U.S. Air Force will support the State University of New York Upstate Medical University Hospital in Syracuse and two 15-person teams from the U.S. Air Force will support the University of Rochester Medical Center—Strong Memorial Hospital in Rochester. These four teams join three teams currently supporting Brooklyn, the Bronx and Buffalo.

» In Oklahoma, two 15-person teams from the U.S. Air Force will support Integris Baptist Medical Center and one 20-person team from the U.S. Army will support OU Health — University of Oklahoma Medical Center in Oklahoma City.

In addition to the aforementioned teams and locations, the joint Department of Defense effort currently includes 17 teams working in 14 states — one in Arizona, one in Indiana, one in Maine, one in Maryland, one in Minnesota, one in Missouri, one in New Hampshire, one in New Jersey, two in New Mexico, two in Ohio, two in Pennsylvania, one in Rhode Island, one in Texas, one in Wisconsin —



Caroline Sirvano (left), a respiratory therapist at Central Maine Medical Center, and U.S. Air Force Capt. Alexander DiGregorio (right), an internal medicine physician assigned to the military medical team deployed to Lewiston, Maine, provide care to a patient as part of COVID response operations Feb. 1.

SGT. KADEN PITT

and one team in the Navajo Nation.

U.S. Army North, under U.S. Northern Command's oversight, provides operational command of the teams.

On Dec. 30, 2021, the Secretary of Defense approved the activation of 1,000 military medical personnel to support the federal COVID-19 response mission. Five hundred of the 1,000 were made available to support requests for federal support on Jan. 15, 2022. The other 500 became available at the end of the month.

These 1,000 personnel join approximately 400 other military medical personnel, previously activated to provide assistance to civilian hospitals.

All of the personnel announced today are from the recently assigned additional forces. In total, more than 495 of the 1,000 additional forces are supporting or will soon support hospitals.

470th Military Intelligence Brigade Soldier joins Sergeant Audie Murphy Club

By Pfc. Joshua Taeckens
U.S. ARMY SOUTH PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Staff Sgt. Kevin Sims Jr., the training non-commissioned officer in charge of information and intelligence analysis with the 470th Military Intelligence Brigade, was recently inducted into the Sergeant Audie Murphy Club for his outstanding leadership and performance at the U.S. Army South Headquarters at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston.

The SAMC, established in 1986 at Fort Hood, Texas, is a private U.S. Army organization for non-commissioned officers who display exemplary leadership achievements, performance and Army knowledge.

Sims, originally from Augusta, Georgia, joined the Army in 2014 to embody the Army values and lifestyle.

"The discipline, comradery, and being a part of something bigger, made me want to serve my country," Sims said. "I just wanted to do my part, be useful and challenge myself. Going through hardships while sharing that experience with others resonated with me."

The selection process was a significant challenge for Sims, one he welcomed as an opportunity to grow as a leader and learn from senior enlisted leadership.

Sims went through three boards to display his discipline and decision-making, two essays with topics chosen by sergeants major and one written exam to show his knowledge of Army regulations.

"It was pretty challenging but definitively worth it," Sims said. "The sergeants major hounded and humbled me during these boards, seeing how and why I made the choices that I made for the scenario-based questions they gave. In the end, I got the most in-depth counseling session that I ever received and was gauged on where I stood as an NCO."

One of the biggest challenges for Sims was balancing time with his Soldier wife and 21-month-old daughter, work obligations and preparing for the boards.

"My wife and I are both in leadership roles at our units, so sometimes we would both get home around five or 6 o'clock," Sims said. "But she pushed me and put in a lot of effort to make sure that I had time to study and prepare."

Sims's wife, who is also studying to join the SAMC, and his sponsor were not the only people supporting Sims in his pursuit to join the club. Retired Army Soldiers from numerous companies and organizations assisted Sims.

Sims was most proud that his Soldiers felt he deserved this recognition with all the preparation and assistance he received.

"It means a lot to me that I was recognized for the work that I put into the process, but what solidifies its importance is that my Soldiers felt like I deserved this," Sims said. "After hearing what they said about me and how they viewed me as their leader, I felt I actually earned it. This award means more than just getting a medal; rather, I proved to myself that I took being a leader seriously and didn't cut corners when



PFC. JOSHUA TAECKENS

U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Kevin Sims, training non-commissioned officer in charge of information and intelligence analysis with the 470th Military Intelligence Brigade, was inducted into the Sgt. Audie Murphy Club for his outstanding performance and leadership as a non-commissioned officer.

taking care of Soldiers, which hopefully encourages them to take on the challenge and do better as well."

Overall, Sims said the experience and knowledge he gained from joining the SAMC has made him a better Soldier and a better leader.

"It's definitely rejuvenated my drive to keep pushing to better myself and others around me," Sims said. "I've already linked up with the SAMC chapter over at my gaining installation and look forward to working with some high-speed members."

NMFSC Sailor receives Joint Service Achievement Medal

By Petty Officer 1st Class David Kolmel
NAVAL MEDICAL FORCES SUPPORT CENTER

Lt. Cmdr. Veronica White, assigned to the operations department of Naval Medical Forces Support Command at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston, received the Joint Service Achievement Medal for her deployment in support of COVID-19 vaccination efforts.

White deployed with U.S. Northern Command's Joint Force Land Component Command to execute medical planning, information flow, and the responsiveness of USNORTHCOM Defense Support of Civil Authorities requirements in support of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's COVID-19 vaccination operations.

Specifically, she completed six site surveys in Boston, Massachusetts; St. Louis, Missouri; Baton Rouge, Louisiana; Tulsa, Oklahoma; and Atlanta, Georgia, visiting U.S. Navy and U.S. Marine Corps assets, delineating requirements for medical and non-medical Department of Defense personnel. Along with site visits, White processed 723 credentials and redeployment of 1,778 Department of the Navy service members and aided 13 Vaccination Support Teams in administering 1.44 million shots across the USNORTHCOM area of responsibility.



PETTY OFFICER 1ST CLASS DAVID KOLMEL

U.S. Army Col. Raymond Jablonka (right), director of U.S. Army North surgeon staff and Joint Force Land Component Command surgeon for COVID-19, presents Lt. Cmdr. Veronica White the Joint Service Achievement Medal for her deployment in support of U.S. North Command COVID-19 vaccination efforts.

"I'm honored and humbled to be receiving this award," White said. "I was just one person in a huge effort and to experience first-hand the level of commitment that our joint forces had to help their fellow man on our soil, it amplifies the meaning behind

'for love and country.'"

Col. Ray Jablonka, U.S. Army North Surgeon and JFLCC surgeon for COVID-19, complemented White on her outstanding efforts during the ceremony.

"I just want to relay my sincerest appreciation to the team, specifically Veronica White, for her dedication and volunteerism to support our operation," Jablonka said. "This was clearly a joint operation, deploying medical teams in support of the state and municipalities, with no higher interest than assisting our own citizens in need."

"In a joint environment while deploying Navy personnel and integrating them into these civilian hospitals and vaccination centers, we needed a subject matter expert that understood how to speak the language of the Navy," Jablonka said. "We greatly appreciated her assistance."

A big part of the deployment was getting to talk to Sailors around the country.

"While at one of the sites, a hospital corpsman came up to me and asked if I had any recommendations for him as this was his first 'deployment,'" White said. "I was awestruck. Here is a fresh Hospital Corpsman asking how to be the best at his job. These little moments get lost in the chaos but it's a great reminder that amid all the uncertainty, we still give it 100%."

LACKLAND

37th TRW recognized with Air Education and Training Command's Verne Orr Award

By Annette Crawford

37TH TRAINING WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The 37th Training Wing at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland has been named as Air Education and Training Command's 2022 recipient of the Verne Orr Award. The award, established by the Air Force Association in honor of former Secretary of the Air Force Verne Orr, recognizes an Air Force unit that makes the most effective use of its human resources.

"This is a huge honor for the Gateway Wing," said Col. Rockie K Wilson, 37th TRW commander. "This is among the most coveted unit-level awards in the Air Force and we're beyond pleased with this recognition. A huge thanks to all Warhawks and those who support our mission. This award once again validates the work our Airmen, Guardians, Soldiers, Sailors and Marines do each and every day. Commanding this wing is rewarding, mainly due to the amazing people we have on our team."

Some of the 37th TRW's most notable mission accomplishments included:

- ▶ The 737th Training Group successfully managed Basic Military Training operations during COVID-19, resulting in more than 36,000 Total Force graduates.
- ▶ The Inter-American Air Forces Academy was recognized as the Air Force's premier international Enabled Professional Military Education training center.
- ▶ The Defense Language Institute English Language Center championed the Secretary of Defense's "succeed through teamwork" objectives.
- ▶ The 37th Training Group chartered aircrew virtual reality concept of operations at the 344th Training Squadron and was awarded AETC's Innovation Pathfinder.

One of the more noteworthy achievements of the wing was its response to Winter Storm Uri in



CHRISTA D'ANDREA

Trainees march to their graduation ceremony at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, on Sept. 30, 2021.

February 2021. The wing provided emergency relief and navigated through numerous power outages. With a team of more than 30 volunteers, they established kitchen operations, and sheltered, fed, and comforted more than 4,000 Airmen.

"The wing was hit by challenges all throughout 2021," said Chief Master Sgt. Mike Morgan, 37th TRW command chief. "Each and every time we conquered one challenge, another emerged, but our cadre's passion for their trainees and students and

commitment to mission always pushed us through."

Resource management was also recognized, including executing a continuous process improvement exercise for Airmen who were delayed in the training pipeline. The team's 15 members did a thorough quality assessment of all relevant programs and developed 12 fixes. The end result brought a waiting list of 500 Airmen down to 25, saving more than \$154,000 daily.

Another major accomplishment was

piloting the Cardio Interval Training program for Basic Military Training — the largest change in 12 years to physical fitness at BMT. More than 400 Military Training Instructors from eight squadrons were trained on this critical aspect of BMT.

"Our wing is truly blessed in that we get to touch nearly every aspect of the training pipeline. The Warhawks take great pride in that responsibility and to have others take notice is beyond gratifying," said Jose R. Surita Jr., 37th TRW executive director.



PHOTOS BY BRIAN BOISVERT

Maj. Gen. Jeannie M. Leavitt (left), Air Force Chief of Safety and commander, Air Force Safety Center, and Chief Master Sgt. Kevin James (right), safety career field manager, speak to students Jan. 20.

Air Force Chief of Safety visits 37th Training Group, 344th TS

By Brian Boisvert

502ND AIR BASE WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

U.S. Air Force Maj. Gen. Jeannie M. Leavitt, chief of safety and commander, Air Force Safety Center, visited the 37th Training Group and 344th Training Squadron at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland Jan. 20.

It was Leavitt's first visit to the 37th Training Group and 344th Training Squadron since taking over as Chief of Safety in August 2021.

The 344th trains enlisted occupational safety professionals to receive their designation as ISO's and enlisted weapons safety managers to receive their initial skills training.



Maj. Gen. Jeannie M. Leavitt (left), Air Force Chief of Safety and commander, Air Force Safety Center, and Tech. Sgt. Ryan L. Wakerlig (center), occupational safety instructor, discuss a virtual reality training scenario, while Senior Airman Bryna Hanson (seated) practices at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland Jan. 20."Col 1, para 1, lines 1-3: replace with "Maj. Gen. Jeannie M. Leavitt, Air Force Chief of Safety, and commander, Air Force Safety Center, visited the 37th Training Group and 344th Training Squadron at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland Jan. 20.

59th MDW periodontist retires after nearly 50 years of service

By Staff Sgt. Amanda Stanford
59TH MEDICAL WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

“Did you accomplish everything you wanted to during your career?”

Col. Alan Dickerson, 59th Dental Group director of clinical periodontics, stood across the exam room and pondered the question, thinking back over his almost 50-year career.

Dickerson donned the Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps uniform in August 1972 at Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana. He was direct commissioned as an electronic warfare officer when he graduated in 1976.

“I originally joined the Air Force because I wanted to see the world,” Dickerson said. “I went through navigation school in Sacramento, then the powers that be decided they wanted me to be an electronic warfare officer. I then went through electronic warfare training and was assigned to the B-52.”

Dickerson served at Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana, from July 1978 until he separated from active duty in 1982.

“Because I have my undergraduate degree in zoology, I had all the prerequisites for dental school,” Dickerson said. “So I got out and went to dental school on my GI Bill. I completed four years of dental school and two years of periodontics training.”

While attending dental school, Dickerson continued to serve as an electronic warfare officer in the Air Force Reserve.

“After I graduated from the periodontics program, I did 16 years of private practice,” Dickerson said. “During that time, I was serving in the Air Force Reserve, but after the first Gulf War, they eliminated my billet. I switched over to the Dental Corps at that time. For the next 14 years, I served in the 926th Fighter Wing out of New Orleans.”

On Aug. 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans and uprooted many lives, including those of Dickerson and his family.

“Hurricane Katrina decided to interrupt my practice,” Dickerson said. “At the same time, the reserve unit closed due to Base Realignment and



STAFF SGT. AMANDA STANFORD

Col. Alan Dickerson, 59th Dental Group director of clinical periodontics, poses for a photo at Dunn Dental Clinic, Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland Jan. 28.

Closure the following year. I took the next year to change components from Reserve to active duty.”

Dickerson returned as an active duty member in October 2006.

“I joined the Air Force again to see the world and what do they do?” Dickerson laughed and responded. “They sent me to Keesler, Mississippi about an hour drive from New Orleans. I enjoyed my time at Keesler a lot.”

After serving at Keesler Air Force Base for five years, Dickerson finally had the opportunity to travel.

“In summer of 2012, I got asked if I wanted to go Yokota Air Base, Japan,” Dickerson said. “I finally got to start doing some traveling then. I spent three years at Yokota, four years at Royal Air Force Lakenheath in the United Kingdom, and then here. It’s been a great experience.”

When he finished his seven years overseas, Dickerson returned stateside to serve as the director of clinical periodontics at the 59th Medical Wing. As director, he mentors and trains general dentistry and periodontics residents and staff.

After thinking about his lengthy career, Dickerson explained why he has served as long as he has.

“The people I have met through my career are like family,” Dickerson said. “I came back on active duty because during my reserve time I served two

weeks with an active duty unit and practiced periodontics with them. I really enjoyed it and wanted to see if I could do that again.”

Before Dickerson retires, he wants to share some thoughts with those still serving or about to start serving.

“It boils down to showing up, doing your job and being conscientious,” Dickerson said. “Show up with a good attitude, be willing to be a team player and things will just work out, eventually.”

When Dickerson retires this month, he plans to spend time with family, relax and enjoy his time.

“We are moving closer to my wife’s family,” Dickerson said. “I might see if there are any practices I can work in part-time, but other than that I like going for hikes in the mountains. It’s also a bike-friendly area, and I enjoy cycling so it’ll be great to do that.”

After thinking about the question, “Did you accomplish everything you wanted to during your career?” Dickerson responded, “I think so. The one thing I didn’t do was hold command like a lot of active duty. I have, however, spent a lot of time in education. I taught part-time while I was in private practice. When I was at Keesler, I taught the residents. Being able to pass on some of the things I’ve learned over the years has been very rewarding. I don’t have any regrets.”

AFICC oversees COVID-19 relief efforts

By Steve Warns

AIR FORCE INSTALLATION AND MISSION
SUPPORT CENTER PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The Air Force Installation Contracting Center is overseeing the execution of billions of dollars in COVID-19 relief, with a recent contract award providing critical materials used in the production of rapid point-of-care COVID-19 test kits.

This contract award enables the production of more than 83 million test kits a month, including those now available to the American public.

"The awards and contract vehicles our team has executed ensure that DOD is postured expeditiously to support the Department of Health and Human Services and the administration's efforts to defeat this disease and safeguard our nation from future pandemics," said Brig. Gen. Alice Trevino, AFICC commander and director of the Department of the Air Force Acquisition COVID-19 Taskforce, or DAF ACT.

The AFICC, a primary subordinate unit of the Air Force Installation and Mission Support Center, currently leads interagency assisted acquisition support efforts for HHS COVID-19 relief on behalf of the Department of Defense, DAF and Air Force Materiel Command.

The DAF ACT, established in March 2020, focuses on supporting the national COVID-19 response through a decentralized framework of acquisition teams operating virtually throughout the United States.

The DAF ACT fully transitioned to AFMC and AFICC in October 2021, after being led by the deputy assistant secretary for contracting, Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition Technology and Logistics.

The current DAF ACT team awarded a \$136.7 million contract in late December 2021, establishing domestic production capacity for the critical materials used in rapid point-of-care COVID test kits. The team also issued a Commercial Solutions Opening, a competitive program authorized by the FY17 National Defense Authorization Act that allows acquisition teams to rapidly obtain innovative commercial solutions to produce more N95 respirators, medical-grade gloves and



medical-grade gowns.

The critical materials production increase, provided by that contract, was one part of the process that now allows the American public to order free COVID-19 tests online. The Department of the Army and Defense Logistics Agency acquisition teams awarded the contract to purchase the complete tests.

"The DAF ACT team is integral to national security and the White House's plan to combat the coronavirus outbreak," Trevino said. "We directly support the DOD's Defense Assisted Acquisition and HHS through domestic industrial base expansion, or IBX, and by building production capacity for vital medical items needed to respond to the national crisis."

The AFICC is estimated to guide and administer the execution of up to \$6 billion in contract awards in the next two years. As part of this effort, AFICC is also expected to play a significant role in continuing to expand domestic industrial production capacity for pharmaceuticals, medical end products, testing and diagnostics capabilities, medical-based raw materials, and other personal protective equipment necessary to combat the global COVID-19 pandemic.

During fiscal year 2021, the DAF ACT executed 29 contracts and obligated \$1.33 billion in support of HHS requirements. The effort included \$636 million to 13 companies

to expand capacity and help companies develop PPE; \$69.3 million to develop domestic production capability for active pharmaceutical ingredients and \$627 million to 15 companies to expand COVID-19 test kit capability.

As the DAF ACT Line of Effort 1 director, Dawn Pease is responsible for acquisition strategy development, contract award and administration, and financial and program management support. Line of Effort 1 focuses on creating capacity to expand the nation's availability of PPE, pharmaceuticals and testing capabilities.

"When COVID-19 hit, the shortfall of medical supplies necessary to respond was immediately apparent," said Pease, who is the director of contracting for the Air Force Sustainment Center's operating location at Hill Air Force Base, Utah. "In many cases, we were dependent on overseas suppliers for items such as masks, gloves and gowns. With COVID-19 being a global pandemic, these overseas suppliers were no longer able to meet demand outside of their own country. In addition, other necessary items such as COVID-19-specific testing kits had not yet been developed.

"This effort (led by AFICC) leverages innovative acquisition solutions to provide immediate support to HHS and expand the U.S. medical-industrial base for the long term," Pease said.

The DAF ACT has not slowed down

since its test kit contract award and has already awarded another 10 contracts worth approximately \$378 million, with another \$200 million planned to be awarded in the first half of FY22.

"We inherited a well-oiled machine that was moving very fast, and we continue to move that machine," said James Lawrence, lead acquisition program manager for AFICC and DAF ACT director of staff. "AFICC's role, as part of AFMC's role, is huge. Although we're pretty much steering the ship on behalf of the Secretary of the Air Force and HHS, it's an enterprise-wide effort, and we've established the structure to ensure the long-term viability of this interagency effort, if needed."

Trevino attributes AFMC's six-center construct to readily synchronize acquisition efforts, a "change agent" mindset to accelerate DAF ACT execution and the support of Air Force senior leaders such as AFMC Commander Gen. Arnold Bunch Jr. and Darlene Costello, acting Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for acquisition, technology and logistics.

"We're empowered to take advantage quickly of the power of the headquarters, the functional chain and the command chain," Trevino said. "For the past 22 months, our DAF ACT professionals have made an enormous difference for our nation and are capturing the lessons learned to prepare proactively for future national emergencies."

Trevino also credits her team in balancing her duties as DAF ACT director and AFICC commander.

"Collectively, we work side-by-side with each other to accomplish the COVID-19 pandemic response mission for our nation, HHS and DOD," Trevino said. "Everything we have achieved and will aspire to accomplish in 2022 is because of our team's alignment and because we communicate, trust each other and do it together."

Editor's Note: To order the free COVID-19 tests, go to www.covidtests.gov and complete the short questionnaire. There is a limit of four tests per household. According to the website, orders are expected to ship in seven to 12 days from receipt of request.

RANDOLPH

Weather is no gambling matter for 12th OSS flight chief

By Benjamin Faske

12TH FLYING TRAINING WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

To the untrained eye, predicting the weather can be like betting red or black at the roulette wheel ... you win some, you lose some.

Fortunately for the 12th Flying Training Wing, they have an ace up their sleeve. Alvin Hill is the weather operations flight chief with the 12th Operations Support Squadron. The 12th OSS is responsible for air traffic control, airfield management, weather, airspace management and aircrew flight equipment for all 12th Operations Group training.

Hill was recently notified that he had won the 2021 Air Force Weather Civilian Category I award for his accomplishments over the last year.

Some of those highlights included creating more than 65 separate hurricane response decision aids and briefing them to wing leadership, which resulted in timely aircraft evacuations ahead of approaching storms.

He also provided 27 CAT briefings to the 479th Flying Training Group leadership at Naval Air Station Pensacola, Florida. His actions



Alvin Hill, 12th Operations Support Squadron weather operations flight chief, stands in front of a wall with five flat-screen TVs that are used to monitor weather patterns throughout the country, Jan. 19 at Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph.

BENJAMIN FASKE

resulted in three separate aircraft evacuations of 24 aircraft, minimizing disruptions to the combat systems officer training mission.

Hill was also instrumental in providing the 502nd Air Base Wing

with the best courses of action in response to the unprecedented and severe Winter Storm Uri in 2021.

Hill's job is to forecast weather in support of Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph's flying mission as

well as resource protection for the base. Hill leads a nine-person team of weather technicians and has worked in weather for 38 years, including 23 years active duty Air Force.

"This award is more a testament to the superb veteran weather team I have around me and my bosses who make sure we're resourced to get the mission done," Hill said upon learning he had won.

It was something that Col. Scott Rowe, 12th FTW commander, said that stuck out in Hill's mind.

"I remember the commander coming into the weather office when he first got here saying, 'My top two priorities are, accomplishing the flying training mission and weather. If I don't have good foundational support for weather, we won't have success with the flying training mission.'"

Predicting the weather has never been easy, despite the technological advances, but Hill wouldn't have it any other way.

"What I enjoy the most is getting the forecast right," he added. "That way, our customers and the community have time beforehand to take appropriate actions."

Stay LinkedIn versus left out with AFW2

By Daria Flowers

AIR FORCE WOUNDED WARRIOR PROGRAM

Did you know that the Air Force Wounded Warrior, or AFW2, Program has a LinkedIn page?

LinkedIn is the world's largest online professional network allowing members and businesses to grow through professional networking.

Initially, the AFW2 LinkedIn page was utilized solely to share information about job openings and upcoming workshops. The page will now be used to share additional informational business pieces about AFW2 with wounded warriors, caregivers, staff, and

other followers who are able to support the program mission by sharing information with their LinkedIn connections, thus increasing the reach of the program's messaging.

One of the best features the site provides is the opportunity to connect.

"With hopes of growing our online presence on this fairly new platform there are also hopes of providing access to more resources and networking connections overall," said Melissa Kirkpatrick, lead education and Employment in Transition coordinator.

An additional aspect of utilizing this site is the opportunity to showcase the AFW2 brand and increase awareness.

There are numerous benefits to creating a LinkedIn profile for our Wounded Warriors and Caregivers. The Empowerment in Transition, or EIT, Program frequently uses this platform while working with warriors and caregivers as they equip, encourage, and empower the development and achievement of long-term career and life goals and provide personalized coaching and guidance to ensure positive management of career changes, building effective ways forward to take charge of their post-military lives.

"EIT works with various LinkedIn

staff members to provide warriors with information on how to maximize the effectiveness of their LinkedIn profiles. We invite LinkedIn guest speakers to work directly with our Wounded Warriors," Kirkpatrick said.

Visit the program's LinkedIn page to learn more about this effort and hear more about the stories of resiliency, and engage in wellness activities hosted by Air Force Wounded Warrior Program at <https://www.linkedin.com/company/afw2>.

For more information, to refer an Airman or Guardian, or to learn more about the program, visit www.woundedwarrior.af.mil for additional resources.

JBSA hosts 2022 Air Force Trials March 19-27

By Shannon Hall

AIR FORCE WOUNDED WARRIOR PROGRAM

With a New Year comes the potential for many challenges and changes. While the world still deals with restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Air Force Wounded Warrior, or AFW2, Program strives to continue providing wounded warriors an avenue to showcase their use of adaptive sports as part of their recovery journey.

To do this best, AFW2 personnel are bringing the 2022 Air Force Trials to Joint Base San Antonio March 19-27.

Air Force Trials is a competitive event used to select Team Air Force to go on to compete at the annual Department of Defense Warrior Games. Normally, the Air Force Trials are held at Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada, with the last in-person competition held there in 2019. However, this year there are big changes to location, with venues looking different, but the training, competitions and successes will all be the same.

"Due to the current COVID-19 restrictions at Nellis, and in order to keep Air Force Trials in-person versus virtual, the decision was made to move the event to San Antonio," said Marsha Strawderman, Warrior Care Support branch chief.

Although COVID-19 is still a concern for many



U.S. AIR FORCE GRAPHIC BY MELISSA ESPINALES

The 2022 Air Force Trials are coming to Joint Base San Antonio, Texas, March 19-27.

warriors, caregivers and staff members, there are necessary precautions being put in place to ensure the event is safe for all who attend.

Not only are all attendees required to be fully vaccinated and have a negative COVID-19 test prior to coming, but there will also be extensive sanitation of all equipment, limited passengers in vehicles, limited people inside the venues and other processes to ensure the safety of everyone's health.

AFW2 understands that traveling right now can be stressful, scary and uneasy but all precautions are

being taken care of, and the excitement of having Air Force Trials in person for the first time since 2019 is overwhelming.

"We're implementing strict COVID protocols to make this the safest event possible, while still fulfilling the desire of every warrior-athlete to compete in person. Although Air Force Trials has never been hosted anywhere other than Nellis, we are extremely excited to host it in San Antonio this year," Strawderman said.

AFW2 staff, coaches and medical teams are working hard behind the scenes to ensure this event is successful for everyone. They remain available, and adaptable, to make any last-minute changes necessary that can come about with the constantly changing COVID environment.

"The fact that we were able to come up with a plan to bring our athletes together is truly a testament to the hard work and dedication of the staff and coaches at AFW2 to make this a memorable experience for each athlete involved," Strawderman said. "It will showcase the power of adaptive sports as part of these Wounded Warriors' recovery and will bring to life our motto of Care Beyond Duty."

For more updates on 2022 Air Force Trials, to refer an Airman or Guardian, and to access resources and tools from other programs offered within AFW2, visit the website at www.woundedwarrior.af.mil.

AETC's DAGGER selected for Air Force 2022 Spark Tank Finals

By Air Education and Training Command

For the third year in a row, Air Education and Training Command has made it to the Spark Tank finals after the six finalists for the 2022 campaign were announced Jan. 26.

Matthew Correia of Air University's Eaker Center submitted Developing Airmen and Guardians with Games for Enhanced Readiness, or DAGGER, which will represent The First Command in the finals.

DAGGER, formerly known as Developing Airmen With Games, or DAWG, leverages sound, proven educational practices with game-based learning. It addresses the Chief of Staff of the Air Force's Action Order A: Airmen, transforming the way we deliberately professionally grow our Airmen, by building better Airmen through Air Force Foundational Competencies and Core Values.

DAGGER will now compete at the AFA Warfare Symposium March 2-4 in Orlando, Florida, where the 2022 Spark Tank winner will be announced.



An Airman uses a gaming rig with Developing Airmen and Guardians with Games for Enhanced Readiness programs to learn practices, or DAGGER.

COURTESY PHOTO

AETC hosts 7th Innovation Summit virtually Feb. 16

By Air Education and Training Command A/9

The 7th Innovation Summit, or iSummit, will be hosted virtually by Air Education and Training Command officials from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. Feb. 16.

The iSummit advances collaboration and is a platform to share experiences on innovation activities and replicate success stories, while identifying potential internal/external business partners to discuss and counter obstacles to innovation.

This iSummit introduces AETC innovators to processes and platforms that can help them quickly bring their creations to the end-user. The theme for this event is "Success with Innovation Complexities."

"This theme gives Airmen the opportunity to highlight how they overcame challenges to complex problems or how they spearheaded complex innovations," said Col. Tom Wegner, AETC director of Analysis and Innovation. "It looks at ways innovation leaders can navigate turbulent waters and navigate their innovation to success. I strongly encourage all First Command innovators to dial in to learn about these innovation trailblazers."

Each presentation will be followed by a question-and-answer session. The schedule is:



COURTESY GRAPHIC

- 19th Air Force: "Innovation in Human Performance" — Use new curriculum design processes and coaching strategies to incorporate complex technology to escalate the complexity & stress level of training to create high-performing combat operators.
- 187th Fighter Wing: "Agility Combat Employment Industry Day in Partnership w/187th FW and Air University" — Provide methods Airmen

and HQ AETC/A9A can link research and operations with companies, universities, and innovation thought-leaders.

- Air University: Olfactory VR (OVR) headsets — Demonstrate how fire and rescue trainers use OVR/VR (new olfactory technology) to train first responders to detect electrical fires and other scents in complex, real-life training environments.

- AU: Project Mercury — The goal is to

empower, equip and unleash Department of the Air Force innovators. This program, in partnership with the University of Michigan's Ross Business School, has 200+ certified professional innovators and will present its success stories for others to learn from.

Airmen interested in attending the event should contact the Innovation Advancement Division team members at aetc.a9a.workflow.2@us.af.mil.

Register now for 2022 Learning Professionals' Consortium

By Larisa Langley

AIR EDUCATION AND TRAINING COMMAND

Registration is open for the 2022 Learning Professionals' Consortium (LPC-22) presented by the Air Force Learning Professionals Program. This virtual event, presented on Zoomgov.com, comes with an update in format for 2022.

"Instead of three continuous days, which can be a challenge for attendees, the LPC-22 will be presented with three single-day events on Feb. 16, April 20, and June 22," said Dr. Angela "Angi" Canada, Air Education and Training Command Credentialing Division chief. "Attendees will have the opportunity to attend one event or all three."

The three single-day events are expected to better accommodate attendees' schedules while providing the opportunity to gain solutions to learning issues, hear successful collaboration stories and learn best practices from across the Air



COURTESY GRAPHIC

Force. The topics will be directly relevant to Air Force Learning Professionals with both presentations and workshops featured.

The Learning Professionals' Consortium is designed for learning professionals across the Air Force to meet, interact, and ultimately collaborate

on advances in learning environments. Air Education and Training Command Credentialing Division's goal is to build a community of Learning Professionals who work together to accelerate the transformation of the DAF learning paradigm.

"I'm excited this year's theme is Explore — Engage — Accelerate," said Dr. Wendy Walsh, Air Education and Training Command Chief Learning Officer. Before I arrived at AETC, I had the opportunity to attend the LPC-21 and found it extremely valuable. These single day events offer an opportunity for Learning Professionals to take advantage of professional development presented by peers across the Air Force."

Registration for the Feb. 16 event is open until Feb. 11 here. For more information on the event visit this web page. For more information on Air Force Learning Professionals visit <https://www.learningprofessionals.af.mil> or <https://www.facebook.com/AFlearningprofessionals>.